

Intro

This article is for the curious minds who want to know why and how I designed and coded my portfolio website during the course: Frontend Development for Designers at CareerFoundry.

Background

Back in 2011, while completing my BA in Communication Design, I attended the class: Interactive Environments with Hernando Barragán, creator of the open-source programming framework: Wiring and contributor to Arduino. His lectures completely redefined my approach to human-computer interaction, and they introduced me to new perspectives around how design, art, and software can come together to craft immersive experiences.

Unfortunately, I quickly ran into a wall. Even after learning the code basics, the programming language was difficult to grasp. I constantly struggled to find the right balance between my creative ambition and the technical limitations of the project. It became rather frustrating than fulfilling.

Fast-forward ten years, I have managed to build a career as a multidisciplinary Designer. However, I always felt a piece in my design process was missing. This piece has the shape of code.

It was only until April 2021, when I finally resolved to take up the challenge of designing and coding my website. But why now and not earlier?

Over the last 2 years, I realized how crucial it is for designers, to understand programming basics, in order to design more accurately, and optimize team workflows. Furthermore, I felt the pressing need to experience skin-deep the whole software development cycle alone and, in the process, create a custom environment to showcase my work.

So, let's get right into how it happened.

Problem

Breaking the wall between design and frontend development has always been a scary and fascinating goal to me. The process of building mobile apps and websites is complex, but I consider that the design hand-off is especially critical for the correct implementation of any digital product.

A lack of communication between designers and software engineers can cause usability issues, technical debts, and team misalignment. On top of that, maintenance can get out of hand if there is no mutual understanding of the guidelines or a solid design system.

For these reasons, I decided to walk into the developer's shoes to ultimately understand how I could make my design hand-off smoother and more efficient.

Goals

- Publish a hand-coded website and demonstrate a fundamental understanding of HTML, CSS, and JavaScript.
- Set up a project on GitHub and learn to collaborate on the same repository with multiple team members.
- Conduct usability and cross-browser testing.
- Establish a reliable communication channel to showcase my design work to future employers or clients.

Timeline

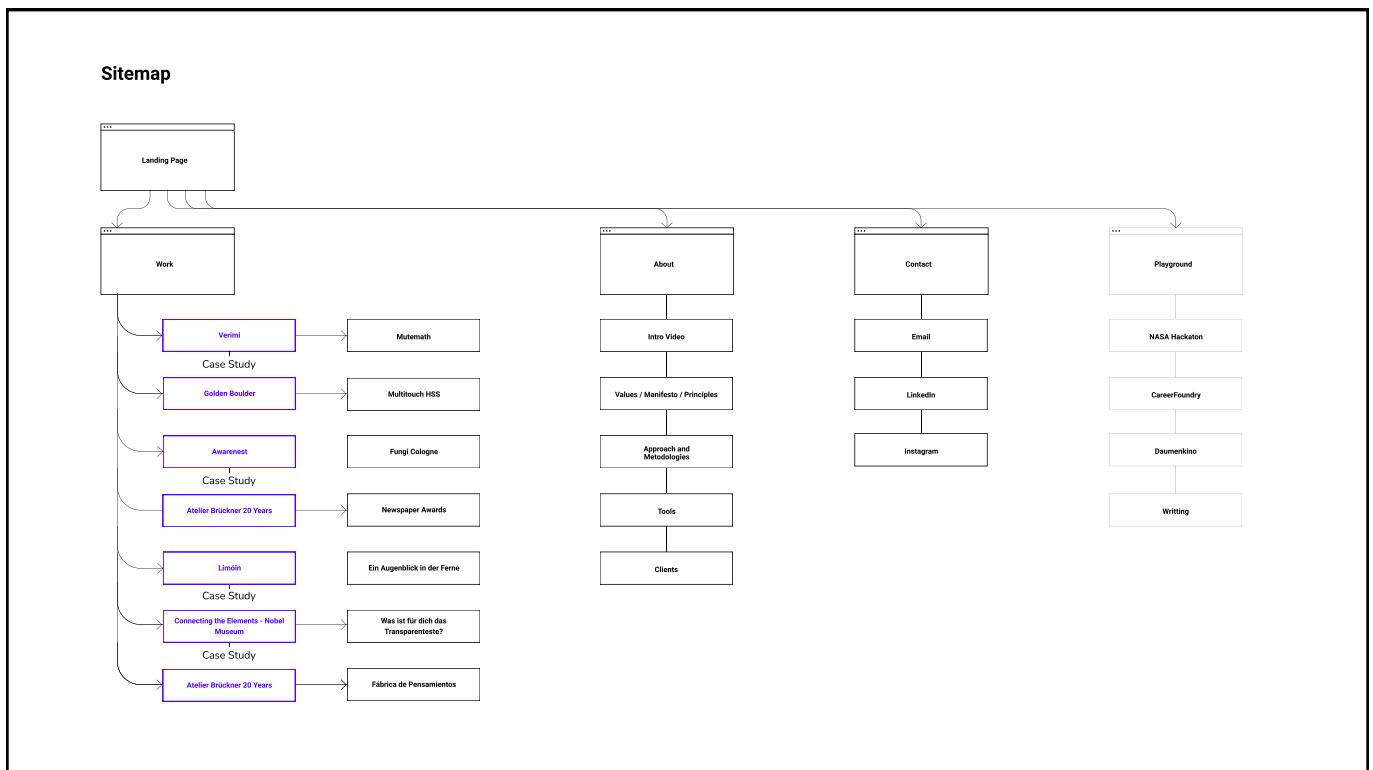
April to May 2021.

Process & Insights

- Gather inspiration from various design portfolios.



- Outline the user journey and define the information architecture for each section.



- Craft the brand concept and the project's style

Rationale

I want to build a portfolio that reflects my personality. To me, water has many properties that I feel a connection with my values. These properties are: Adaptability, Clarity, Transparency, Certainty. I want the look and feel of my website to feel natural and fresh like water.

Color



Typography

The primary typeface for my portfolio is **Nunito** because it is simple yet clear and readable.

It is also a webfont available in many browsers.

Aa

Light

My mission is to support planet-friendly organisations to enhance their digital products through design, and help them achieve their goals to make a positive impact in the world.

Regular

My mission is to support planet-friendly organisations to enhance their digital products through design, and help them achieve their goals to make a positive impact in the world.

Bold

My mission is to support planet-friendly organisations to enhance their digital products through design, and help them achieve their goals to make a positive impact in the world.

- Set up the roadmap using a kanban-board in Notion.

Flowlian - Board

This is the task board for my website

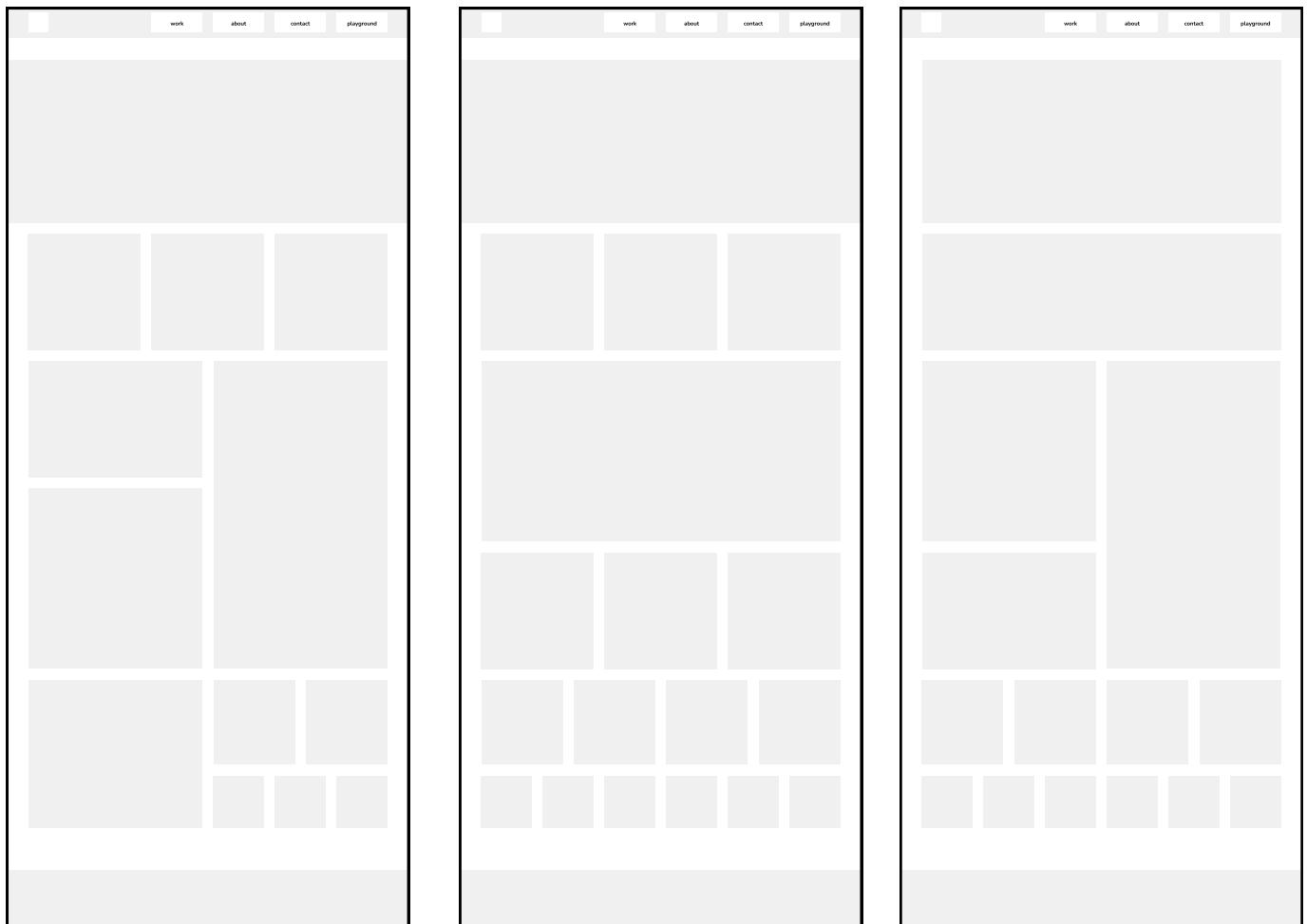
+ Add a view Properties Group by Status Filter Sort Search ... New

To Do	Doing	Done	No Status
Update the image on Framework	Create project for Verimi	Fix footer for mobile	1
Create project for limoin	+ New	Change color for links and CTAs on css	
Create project for golden boulder		Adjust hero video and text	
fix footer line spacing		Change color of logos	
+ New		Reduce video size	
		Adapt JS on Testimonials Carrousel	
		Adapt the CSS for intro animation	
		fix contact links for mail	
		Create work page	
		Create contact page	
		Update contact as modal	
		+ New	

- Create a storyline to tell users about my story and my work.



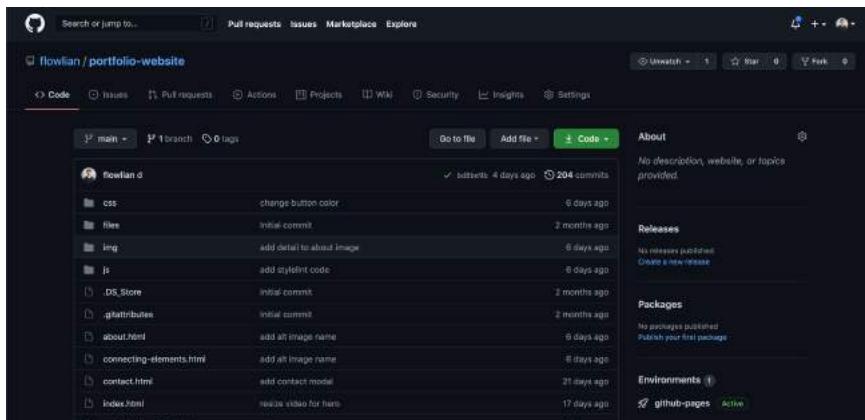
- Brainstormed and sketched wireframe layouts, taking into consideration industry best practices.



- Curate content, including imagery, copy, icons, animations, videos, prototypes, and mock-ups.



- Insert code in HTML, CSS styling, and JavaScript, using Atom and GitHub as a repository.



- Develop the pages using a mobile-first approach, and add media queries for responsiveness within regular screen sizes.

- Conduct a scenario-based user testing with five participants and update the website with selected feedback.

2.4: User Testing

Julian Perez

USER TESTING SCRIPT

Personal Questions

- What is your name?
- Occupation/Background
- Which device are you using for this user test?
- Have you ever reviewed portfolio websites before? For which purpose?

Thank you, we have completed the first part. Now lets dive into the test.

Starting Situation

You're a tech recruiter/senior designer/senior developer, and you have a client/work in a company that is looking for a UX/UI Designer. They are specifically looking for a designer with experience in creating high-fidelity wireframes and mobile user interfaces for German audiences.

Someone from your network referred you to my portfolio website because they think I might have the skills your client/company is looking for.

You will now get the link for the portfolio (send link) and I will give you five different scenarios or tasks to complete.

USER TESTING SCRIPT

Task Scenarios

SCENARIO 1
Clicked on the portfolio link. In front of you is the designer's homepage. Describe your first impression.

SCENARIO 2
You heard that this designer has experience in creating high-fidelity wireframes and mobile user interfaces for German audiences. Please locate that particular project for your review.

SCENARIO 3
You browse through the project and feel that your client/company would potentially like this designer's work. But first, you want to learn more about the designer (experience, background, values, etc.). Where would you find that information?

SCENARIO 4
You are now more convinced that this designer is a good fit and want to check out his working experience. Where would you find that information?

SCENARIO 5
You like what you see on the resume, and now you're interested in contacting this designer. How might you proceed?

RESULTS SYNTHESIS & ERROR RATING

Issue	Error Rating	Suggestion(s)
Describe first impressions	2	Make it more personal Put me on the forefront and less on the background.
Locate project with high-fidelity wireframes and mockups for German audiences	4	Rethink how the projects are being explained. More about my work and less about the companies where I worked. Add more recycling and less text.
Find more about the designer	3	Make the about page shorter Add a more professional image Less sections
Find about the experience of the designer	1	Add accessibility principles to the buttons and the color palette
Contact the designer through his website	1	Generate a link for the email address with text and not with icons Remove Instagram or Behance if they do not fulfill a purpose

Note: I don't agree that this is a creativity problem at all.

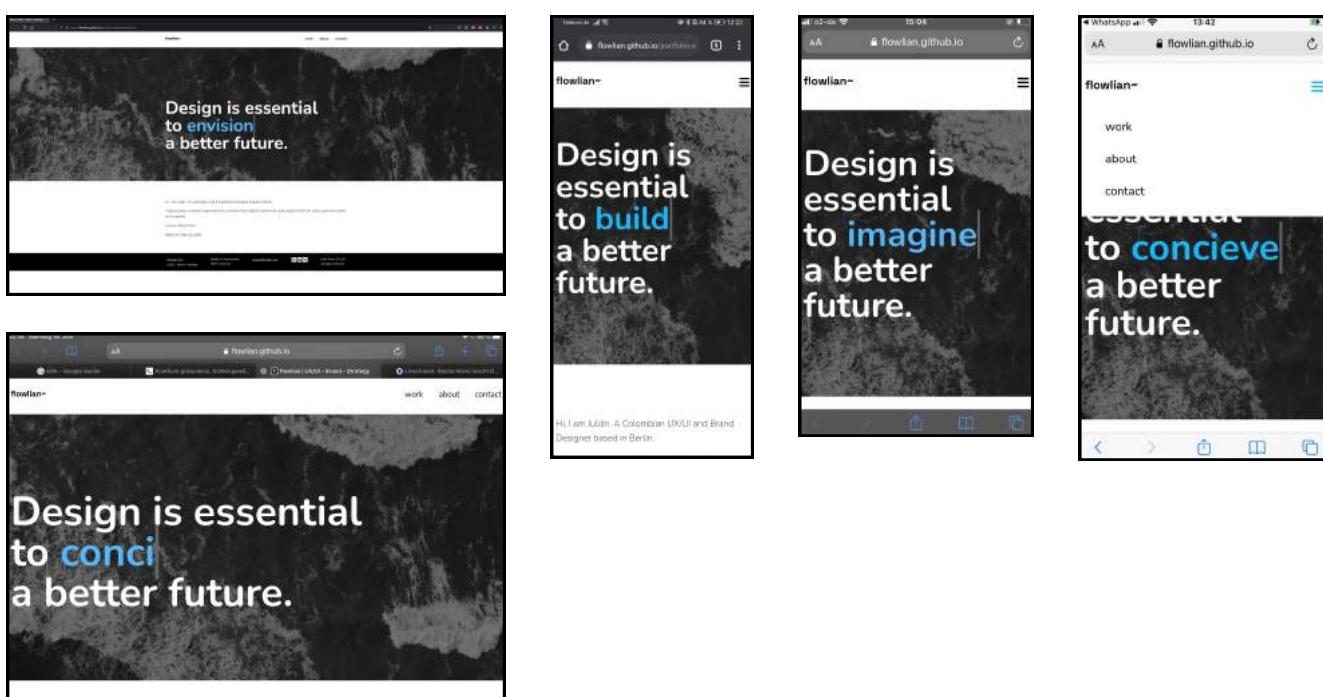
1 = Cosmetic problem only - need not be fixed unless critical to avoid loss of project

2 = Minor creativity problem - fixing this should be given low priority

3 = Major creativity problem - important to fix and should be given high priority

4 = Creativity catastrophic - imperative to fix before product can be released

- Run cross-browser testing, check multiple screen sizes, review different breakpoints including mobile, tablet, and desktop.



- I adapted my Resume to the brand language of the website and added the new skills learned during the course in Frontend.



Julián Pérez

UX/UI - Brand - Strategy

Purpose-driven & team-oriented Designer, who cares about creating impactful digital experiences.

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Berlin, Germany



Work Experience

2020 - Today	UI Design Tutor CareerFoundry Berlin, Germany
2019 - Today	UX/UI Designer Verimi Berlin, Germany
2018	Communication & Media Designer Stories within Architecture Berlin, Germany
2014 - 2015	Co-founder & Curator Vitrine Gallery Weimar, Germany

Internships & Volunteering

2017 - 2018	Brand & Museum Graphics - Internship Atelier Brückner Stuttgart, Germany
2016 - 2017	Art Exhibition Planning - Volunteering KungerKiezInitiative Berlin, Germany

Education

2021	Frontend Development for Designers - Certification CareerFoundry Berlin, Germany
2019	UI Design - Certification CareerFoundry Berlin, Germany
2012 - 2015	M.F.A. Media Art & Design Bauhaus-Universität Weimar Weimar, Germany
2006 - 2011	B.A. Communication Design Universidad de los Andes Bogotá, Colombia

Languages

Spanish Native
English Full Professional Proficiency
German Professional Working Proficiency

Software

Figma
Sketch
InVision
Adobe CC
Zeplin
Atom (HTML, CSS, JS)
Google Suite

Research

Prototyping
Wireframes
Information Architecture
Mockups
Storyboards
Style Guides
Usability Testing
Personas & Scenarios
Workshop Facilitation
Design Thinking
User Journeys

Interests

Rock Climbing
Road Cycling
Meditation

- Check the accessibility of general components. The color contrast for the button did not pass.

Therefore I opted for a simple black/white solution that makes clear for users where to click to find my Resume.

ACCESSIBLE COLORS

My text color is **#17BAFF** at **18 px** and **regular** weight

My background color is **#FFFFFF**

My design must be **AA** compliant

Fails AA	Passes AA	Passes AA
Required contrast ratio: 4.5	if you change background color to #424242 or if you change text color to #007EB4	New contrast ratio: 4.55
Your contrast ratio: 2.21	New contrast ratio: 4.52	New contrast ratio: 4.52
Lorum ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, sed do..	Lorum ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, sed do..	Lorum ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, sed do..

My journey

With a focus on UX/UI, Brand, and Design Strategy, I collaborate with tech startups, independent brands, and social organizations, who are on a path to build a positive impact on the planet.

After finishing my Bachelor in Communication Design, currently I live in Weimar in Germany, where I studied a Master in Media Art and Design at the Bauhaus University. Shortly after, I moved to Berlin, and this is the place that I call now HOME.

Currently I work as a UI/UX Designer at Veege, and as a Design Tutor at GeekEquality. Additionally I am open to supporting meaningful projects, where I can use my creative power for a bigger purpose.

Once the work is done, you can usually find me climbing walls, road cycling, learning about frontend development or experimenting with plant-based recipes.

I am happy to update and exchange ideas!

Get resume

ACCESSIBLE COLORS

My text color is **#FFFFFF** at **18 px** and **regular** weight

My background color is **#000000**

My design must be **AA** compliant

Passes AA	Passes AA
Required contrast ratio: 4.5	Required contrast ratio: 4.5
Your contrast ratio: 2.1	Your contrast ratio: 2.1
Lorum ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, sed do..	Lorum ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, sed do..

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Get resume

- Utilize code linting to avoid bugs and ensure consistent code quality.

Nu Html Checker

This tool is an ongoing experiment in better HTML checking, and its behavior remains subject to change

Showing results for <https://flowlian.github.io/portfolio-website/index.html>

Checker Input

Show source outline image report

Options...
Check by address https://flowlian.github.io/portfolio-website/index.html
Check

Document checking completed. No errors or warnings to show.

Used the HTML parser. Externally specified character encoding was utf-8.
Total execution time 71 milliseconds

About this checker · Report an issue · Version: 21.6.16

Nu Html Checker

This tool is an ongoing experiment in better HTML checking, and its behavior remains subject to change

Showing results for <https://flowlian.github.io/portfolio-website/connecting-elements.html>

Checker Input

Show source outline image report

Options...
Check by address https://flowlian.github.io/portfolio-website/connecting-elements.html
Check

Document checking completed. No errors or warnings to show.

Used the HTML parser. Externally specified character encoding was utf-8.
Total execution time 102 milliseconds

About this checker · Report an issue · Version: 21.6.16

Nu Html Checker

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Showing results for <https://flowlian.github.io/portfolio-website/work.html#popup-article>

Checker Input

Show source outline image report

Options...
Check by address https://flowlian.github.io/portfolio-website/work.html#popup-article
Check

Document checking completed. No errors or warnings to show.

Used the HTML parser. Externally specified character encoding was utf-8.
Total execution time 72 milliseconds

About this checker · Report an issue · Version: 21.6.16

Nu Html Checker

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Showing results for <https://flowlian.github.io/portfolio-website/about.html>

Checker Input

Show source outline image report

Options...
Check by address https://flowlian.github.io/portfolio-website/about.html
Check

Document checking completed. No errors or warnings to show.

Used the HTML parser. Externally specified character encoding was utf-8.
Total execution time 103 milliseconds

About this checker · Report an issue · Version: 21.6.16

Nu Html Checker

This tool is an ongoing experiment in better HTML checking, and its behavior remains subject to change

Showing results for <https://flowlian.github.io/portfolio-website/work.html>

Checker Input

Show source outline image report

Options...
Check by address https://flowlian.github.io/portfolio-website/work.html
Check

Document checking completed. No errors or warnings to show.

Used the HTML parser. Externally specified character encoding was utf-8.
Total execution time 92 milliseconds

About this checker · Report an issue · Version: 21.6.16

Nu Html Checker

This tool is an ongoing experiment in better HTML checking, and its behavior remains subject to change

Showing results for <https://flowlian.github.io/portfolio-website/verim-registration.html>

Checker Input

Show source outline image report

Options...
Check by address https://flowlian.github.io/portfolio-website/verim-registration.html
Check

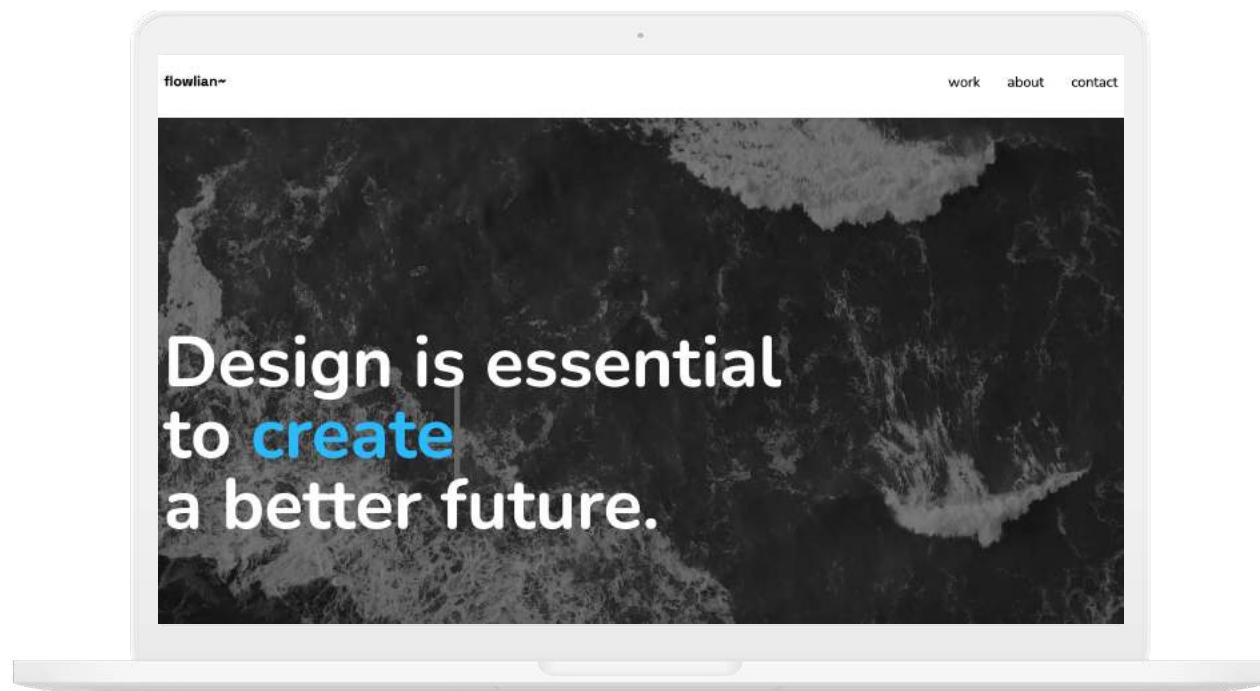
Document checking completed. No errors or warnings to show.

Used the HTML parser. Externally specified character encoding was utf-8.
Total execution time 80 milliseconds

About this checker · Report an issue · Version: 21.6.16

Solution

Homepage



Hi, I am Julián. A Colombian UX/UI and Brand Designer based in Berlin.
I help purpose-oriented organisations to enhance their digital experiences, and support them to create a positive impact on the planet.

Curious about how?
[Meet me | See my work](#)

flowlian.com
UXUI - Brand - Strategy

Based in Friedrichshain
Berlin, Germany

neila@flowlian.com

Instagram LinkedIn Behance

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ABOUT PAGE

PROJECT PAGE

Results

- Published my website and learned the fundamentals of HTML, CSS, and JavaScript.
- Additional to the completing the curriculum of the course, I added animations in CSS and Javascript to make some sections stand out.
- Successfully created a project on GitHub and learned to collaborate with different branches.
- Built a solid and professional website to showcase my design work and establish online presence.